

STRATFORD

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Healthcare EDI and Management Software

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stratford notes

We continue to get requests about whether or not Stratford is Y2K ready. The answer is YES. The Stratford program has been ready since 1988. All dates are stored in the Stratford database exactly like birth dates. In other words, the program will accept dates before 1900 as well as after the year 2000. The program is "leap year smart". This means that the program is aware that 1900 was not a leap year. If you enter 02/29/1900 for a birth date, you will receive an error message. If you enter 02/29/2000 or 02/29/2004 you will not receive an error message. The formula for leap years is simple. Just apply the 2 tests below. If either test passes, it is a leap year.

- (1) Can 400 evenly divide the year? yes = leap year
- (2) Can 4 but not 100 evenly divide the year? yes = leap year

The year 2000 passes the first test so it is a leap year. The year 1900 fails both tests.

Is the year 1998 a leap year? No. It fails both tests.

The other request that we continue to get is whether Stratford is "Windows compatible." The answer is yes. We estimate that at least 60% of our customers have Windows. At least half of those are Windows 95. A small percentage has Windows NT. The percentage of customers with NT is increasing but Windows 95 continues to

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Stratford has more than 3,400 licensed users

dominate. Practically every new customer has Windows 95. We have never had a compatibility problem. All the multi-user functions work best with Windows 95 and or Windows NT. Anytime a customer has problems with Novell, LANtastic or DOS, we always recommend that they get Windows 95. For almost one year, we have had a special installation program that is specific for computers with Windows (any version). Our DOS installer does work on computers with Windows, but the Windows installer can take care of many tasks such as setting up the icon, etc.

As soon as the Stratford program starts, it auto-senses the operating system and the amount of memory available. The program is capable of running in a true 32-bit mode if there is sufficient memory. Because memory is so cheap, we plan to discontinue supporting the 16-bit functions. •

You can find Stratford's Internet server at this address:

Training Classes

SHS Software Basic Training

In the Stratford Classroom:

Every Friday 9:30 AM -12:00 PM \$165

1:30 PM - 4:00 PM \$165

By Appointment \$165

Call for class availability at least three days in advance.

On-site training with a certified Stratford trainer may be available (*by appointment only*). The cost is \$250.

Telephone training is also available (*by appointment*)

FROM THE EDI CORNER.....

BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee has upgraded their Bulletin Board System. To use the new BBS you need to call a different phone number and you also need a new ProComm script. You must make the change before October 1, 1998. If this affects you, and you have not received an update from Stratford, please fax a request to (650) 692 1073. The new bulletin board will accept NEIC claims at no charge. Of course, with the Stratford program, you can transmit directly to NEIC at no charge. •

OPTION CODING

HCFA has mandated that all Medicare contractors implement option coding. This will only affect individual physicians who are group members. A new number called a "G" number or "group affiliation number" will be issued to every physician who renders services for a group/group site. If a physician is affiliated with more than one group then that physician will receive a different "G" number for each group/group site. You could think of this number as a new "PIN" number. In fact, if you now practice in several locations, you have a different PIN number for each

location, or at least you should have a different number. The only change is that physicians who are affiliated with a group will receive a new number. For claims received after July 1, 1998 (by NHIC and possibly others) the "G" number must be used for the rendering provider number on all claims. For paper claims (HCFA 1500), this number must appear in box 24K. For electronic claims, this number will appear in place of the previously used rendering provider number. For Stratford customers, this change is very easy to implement. Simply go to the provider record and replace the present rendering provider number (PIN) with the new number. If you are not sure what, if anything needs to be done, here is some specific information. First of all, the number starts with a "G". All providers on file with Medicare have been issued the new number and if you are a member of a group (in Medicare's records) you should have already received the number. To enter the number into the Stratford data files, select from the main directory: 8,6,1. When you see the window, select the provider that you wish to change by pressing "C". Go to the field labeled: **Medicare (PIN)** and enter the "G" number. Do not confuse this with the UPIN number. Do not change the UPIN number. Also, in the past we have had articles about the up-and-coming NPI or National Provider Identification number. That is a different number, which has not yet been implemented. •

EDI "per-claim" charges

Stratford does not have any "per-claim" or other charges related to transmitting claims to Medicare or any other carrier. We only charge (optional) for providing software support.

PCPLUS - BLANK SCREEN

Do you have PCPlus version 4.5/32? Have you ever received a blank screen while transmitting and had to press "Control-C" or reset your computer? We have had quite a few calls with this problem in the past 6 months. The phone line going dead can cause this. The most common cause is the user (you) touching the keyboard while the transmission is in process. If you touch the keyboard, you will cause the script to stop and act on your command. When the script stops, there usually will be no way for it to start again. This is by design and it is for a good purpose, but it can be a headache when you are running a script. If the screen does hang for five minutes, then you have no choice except to quit PCPlus and then press control-C. This will cause the PCPlus screen to disappear. You will either go directly back to the Stratford program or to the Windows desktop. If you end up in the Windows desktop, just select the Stratford button at the bottom of the screen to go back into the Stratford program. Usually, you can simply retransmit. You do not need to clear out any variables, etc. Nothing will be damaged and there is no need to worry. If you are certain that you did not touch the keyboard (you must be at least 3 feet from the keyboard to be sure), then we would appreciate knowing about it. We have a list of about 10 people that seem to occasionally have the problem even though the phone line is OK and they did not touch the keyboard. •

Stratford will run your Stratford software related classified ad in our monthly newsletter *free*, upon SHS approval! Fax your ad to us at (650) 692-1073.



MERCED: 64 BITS

Merced is the name of the new Intel 64-bit microprocessor. It will be in the stores before you know it. Why should you care about 64-bit processors? It will let you easily access a very large amount of information. If you read this newsletter every month, you will notice that we often have information on new technology that enables a very large amount of information to be stored and retrieved at a very low cost. The reason is that every time we look at designing a clinical information addition to our product we run up against the same problem. The problem is that a small group of internal medicine specialists, 5 to 7 providers can quickly have hundreds of megabytes of data. It is not difficult to imagine a database with more than a terabyte of data. All that data needs to be indexed intelligently so it can be retrieved for reporting. A terabyte of data requires a storage device that is large but that is just the beginning. To search through that much data and occasionally reorganize it requires a very expensive, very fast computer today. •

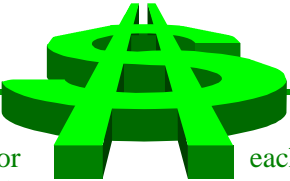
SOFTWARE SUPPORT NOTES

- 1 **Faxed requests for support get Priority Service.**
- 2 **If you send a fax with a description of the problem, your call is given priority over other faxes.**
- 3 **Do not call more than one time. The second call places your first call at the bottom of our callback list.**

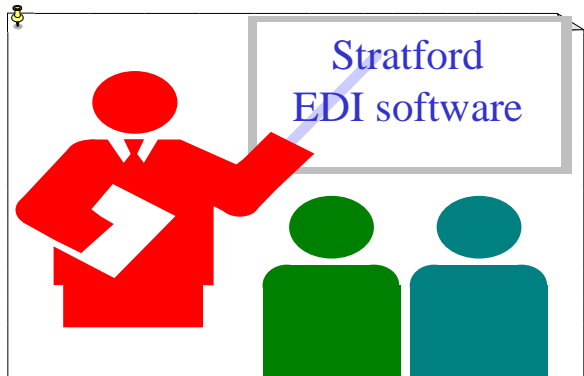
We can receive many calls in the first few hours each day. It usually is not possible for us to have a technical support person waiting to take your call. If you just call and leave the message "please call", your call is placed at the bottom of the callback list. We must do everything we can to avoid "phone-tag". Hand-written faxes can be almost impossible to read, so please type them whenever possible. Include the best time to call you.

At this time we can deliver support by email. If you check your email each day, you may find this to be easier than faxing us. This is not very good support if you need a quick answer. We do not get very many support email messages so we only check the mail two or three times each day. As the volume increases, we will put more resources into email.

We are interested in hearing from people who would like to receive support by email. •

Stratford  will pay you \$100 for you refer who each person* purchases Stratford Software at full price (\$895). Simply fax or write to give us your referral. **We must receive the referral notice in advance of the sale. We cannot pay for a referral if you notify us after the sale.**

*Subject to restrictions



INTERNET RESOURCES

Here is an Internet link.

<http://www.diabetes.org/ada/medcite.htm>

MedCite is a high performance, medical literature service for Healthcare professionals and consumers.

MedCite uses Medline, the peer-reviewed, medical literature database maintained by the National Library of Medicine. This database provides information on current medical literature from over 4,000 medical and health journals.

MedCite offers the option to receive the full text of selected citations and abstracts. An administrative and copyright fee is charged for a full text document delivered through this service. •

Stratford Newsletter

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New Software Sales Only (800) 274-4594